



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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REP. BARNES HONORS BRENDA WESLEY WITH WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY “HOMETOWN HERO” AWARD

MADISON – Wisconsin State Representative Mandela Barnes (D – Milwaukee) honored Milwaukee resident Brenda Wesley with a Wisconsin State Assembly “Hometown Hero” Award on the floor of the Wisconsin State Assembly on Tuesday, February 9, 2016.

The “Hometown Heroes” program recognizes individuals from around the state who give of themselves to make a difference in our communities and in the lives of those around them. These are people whose care and concern for others causes them to unconditionally mentor, intervene, or lend a hand wherever needed.

Rep. Barnes is recognizing Brenda Wesley as a “Hometown Hero” for her steadfast efforts to promote education, advocacy and support for persons with mental illness, and their friends and their families. She has done exceptional work in addressing the growing mental health challenges in the African American community by working to educate our communities and helping increase access to care for those who need it the most.

“Brenda’s demonstrated passion and advocacy for improving the lives of individuals and families living with mental illness in our communities is simply remarkable, and it is a sincere honor to recognize Brenda for her unparalleled work and vision,” said Rep. Barnes. “Brenda’s commitment to reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness and breaking down barriers for individuals and families to receive access to treatment and live full, productive lives is truly extraordinary.”

Brenda’s unique perspective is based in first-hand experience: two of her closest family members live with mental illness. She left her work in corporate America in order to advocate for those without a voice and serves as the Director of Education and Outreach for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Greater Milwaukee.

“I am humbled by this recognition from Rep. Barnes on the Assembly floor today, as I have dedicated my life to educate communities, create awareness, and decrease stigma around mental illness and addiction,” said Ms. Wesley. “We know that mental illnesses and addictions are not partisan issues. These illnesses affect all of us. They occur in large cities, like Milwaukee, and small towns across Wisconsin. They touch our families, our schools, our communities, and we must start breaking down the walls and removing the barriers that prevent access to treatment.”

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